Agenda (Subject to Change)

Thursday, May 10
12:30 – 2:00 pm  Opening Plenary Session  “The Role of Intermediary Public Policy Organizations in the Era of the States”
Welcome Address given by Kim Hunter Reed, Ph.D., Executive Director, Colorado Department of Higher Education, and Karen Riley, Ph.D., Dean, Morgridge College of Education, University of Denver

Expert panelists respond to policy brief findings:

- Cheryl Crazy Bull, Ph.D. President, American Indian College Fund
- Joe Garcia, J.D., President Western Interstate Commission of the States
- Robert E. Anderson, Ph.D., President, State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

2:00 – 2:15 pm  Break
Concurrent Session Block 1

Concurrent Session A: The Bi-Partisanship Imperative for Equity-Focused Public Policy in the Era of the States
- Mary Fulton, Senior Policy Analyst, Postsecondary and Workforce Development, Education Commission of the States
- Ben Boggs, Program Principal, Education, National Conference of State Legislatures

Concurrent Session B: Contemporary Issues of Student Affairs and Public Policy
- Laura Sponsler, Ph.D., Clinical Assistant Professor, Higher Education, Morgridge College of Education, University of Denver

Concurrent Session C: How K-12 Policies in Colorado Influence Equity and Opportunity in the P-20 Environment
The session focuses on four K-12 issues, using evidence from the field, to better understand the decisions made, the impact of the policy on marginalized students, and the policy outcomes. The session will include presentations from Educational Leadership and Policy Studies doctoral students based on a ten-week group research project. The policy issues explored are (a) statewide policy to address teacher shortages, (b) districtwide policy on vouchers, (c) districtwide policy on school choice, (d) districtwide policy on school closure - all policies that can also support or challenge higher education equity and opportunities.
- Erin Anderson, Assistant Professor, Education Leadership and Policy Studies, Morgridge College of Education, University of Denver

Concurrent Session D: TIA Panel focused on Tennessee and Colorado
- Mike Krause, Executive Director, Tennessee Higher Education Commission & Student Assistance Corporations
- Kim Hunter Reed, Ph.D., Executive Director, Colorado Department of Higher Education
- Scott Jenkins, Strategy Director, Lumina Foundation (confirmed)
- Therese Evancovich, Executive Director, Denver Education Attainment Network

Concurrent Session E: Public Policy and Finance in the Era of the States
- “The Growing Price Tag of Legal Education: Enrollment of Students from Different Racial Groups,” Ami Li, Assistant Professor, University of Northern Colorado.

Law schools have steadily increased their tuition and fee prices across the last decade, which may disproportionally reduce access for students of color. This study incorporates data on 194 public and private U.S. law schools from 2006 to 2015 to explore whether students from different racial groups are differentially price sensitive to tuition prices and the estimated net costs of
Results from two-way fixed effects models suggest that the enrollment of Black and Hispanic students does not change in response to increases in tuition or estimated net costs. However, more Asian American students enroll when tuition prices are higher, and more Asian American and White students enroll when net costs are higher.

- “The Paper Chase: Student Loan Default and Repayment Rates Across Higher Education Sectors,” Ami Li, Assistant Professor, University of Northern Colorado.

As of September 2017, there was $1.36 trillion in outstanding student loan debt. Colleges are evaluated by their cohort default rates and repayment rates. This study uses data from the College Scorecard on the cohorts of students who entered repayment during 2010 and 2011 to examine demographic characteristics that are predictive of student loan repayment rates at 2-year public colleges, for-profit colleges, 4-year public colleges, and 4-year private colleges, for a total sample of 2,371 colleges.

- “‘Getting Our Story Out’: How Public Regional Universities Fundraise and Engage with Philanthropic Foundations,” Kevin McClure, Assistant Professor, University of North Carolina Wilmington, Paige Epenstein-Anderson, Doctoral Student, University of North Carolina Wilmington, Sara Thorndike, Doctoral Student, University of North Carolina Wilmington.

A recent study argued that public regional universities struggle to compete for grants and donations from foundations and other philanthropic organizations. This is problematic because the share of total philanthropic giving to higher education coming from foundations has increased. The purpose of this study was to empirically examine fundraising at public regional universities in an era of declining state support. In particular, we utilized case study methodology to better understand the challenges and strategies of public regional universities as they attempt to build relationships with and secure donations or grants from foundations.

Concurrent Session F: Equity-Focused Linkages between K-12 and Higher Education Public Policy


Research has long shown that, of the school-based factors impacting student achievement, teachers have the greatest level of influence. Unfortunately, many urban, rural, high-poverty, high-minority and low-achieving schools are unable to filling teaching
positions with qualified candidates, leaving too many students without consistent, quality instruction. Many states are working to address teacher shortages through changes to state policy. This session will cover the Education Commission of the States’ scan of 2017 state legislation aimed at recruiting high quality, minority and retired teachers to high-needs schools and subject areas.

- “Racial Equity in Concurrent Enrollment,” Janiece Mackey, Executive Director of YAASPA/Political Science & Ethnic Studies Adjunct Faculty/PhD student in Higher Education

 When discussing students of color in concurrent enrollment, the lens of racial equity must be centered. Racial equity is reflective of not solely the demographics of students in concurrent enrollment, but the pedagogies, policies, practices, processes, and systems students of color navigate throughout their concurrent enrollment experiences. In order to begin to explore racial equity for students of color in concurrent enrollment, a mixed methods approach of statistical analyses and practitioner interviews were conducted by the author with critical race theory as a theoretical foundation.

- “Advancing Race-Conscious Affirmative Action across the P-20 Pipeline: Recommendations for State Policy and Practice,” Stephanie Puello, Student Progress Coordinator at University of Colorado Denver, and Lydia Supplee, Faculty Support Manager, Sturm College of Law, University of Denver

 Grounded in Critical Race Theory, this paper explores how state involvement can play an important role in furthering race-conscious affirmative action to both develop and improve academic preparation and college access for underrepresented students. Recommendations for state policy and practice focus upon alignment efforts between secondary and postsecondary educational systems, and, ultimately, serve as a call to action for states to assert the need for specialized and intentional support of underrepresented students along the education pipeline.

3:45 – 4:00 pm  Break

4:00 – 5:30 pm  Keynote Address: Ted Mitchell, Ph.D., President, American Council on Education

Opening remarks and introduction by Rebecca Chopp, Ph.D., University of Denver
5:30 – 7:00 pm  **Reception and Post Session**
Posters Presentations
- “The Equity Implications of Degree Completion Programs,” **Patrick Lane**, Director, Data Initiatives, Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education
- “Well-Being Implementation in the Face of Many Challenges,” **Reggie Gwinn**, University of Denver
- “Enrichment's Potential: The Social Change Model of Leadership Development as a Basis for Qualitative Research,” **Andrew Fox**, University of Denver

Friday, May 11

8:00–9:30 am  **Plenary Strategy Session: Supporting Undocumented Students in the Era of the States**

9:30 – 9:45 am  **Break**

9:45 – 11:15 am  **Concurrent Session 2**

**Concurrent Session A: The Equity Case for Data Reform**

Graduation rates rose by 5 percentage points over last decade, on average. But graduation gaps between underrepresented minority (URM) students and white students grew at over half of institutions nationally, with graduation rates for URM students falling at nearly a quarter of schools. Colorado is among the ten worst states in the country in postsecondary attainment gaps between white non-Hispanic adults and Latinx and African American adults. With better data, prospective students, advocates, and state policymakers could: identify schools that are decreasing college completion gaps; scale best practices; and adjust funding to reward colleges achieving higher education equity.

- **Christina Postolowski**, Rocky Mountain Regional Director, Young Invincibles, **Allie Aguilera**, Policy Manager, Young Invincibles, **Reid Setzer**, Government Affairs Director, Young Invincibles, and **Jack Califano**, Rocky Mountain Organizing Coordinator, Young Invincibles
**Concurrent Session B:** Advancing Public Policy: Policy organizations and state engagement case studies

- **Lexi Anderson**, Policy Analyst, Education Commission of the States, **Andy Carlson**, Principal Policy Analyst, State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, **Rachel Christeson**, Research Associate, National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, and **Patrick Lane**, Director of Data Initiatives, Western Interstate Commission

  The role of an intermediary public policy organization in higher education varies. Each organization has unique connections to states including, but not limited to, providing third-party recommendations, completing state policy analyses, and direct state technical assistance. This session provides case studies from three postsecondary policy organizations and their direct service to states. The three organizations highlighted include the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, and National Center for Higher Education Management Systems. In addition to presenting case studies, panelists will discuss the importance of partnerships with peer organizations to provide high-level assistance to states.

**Concurrent Session C:** Public Policy and Educational Access

- “Helping to Educate, Not Recidivate: Turning Prisons into Places for Learning by Creating College-Going Cultures,” **Rachel Lovendahl**, Ed.D. Student, University of Denver

  Access and opportunity to postsecondary education in and outside of corrections is central to the resettlement process of incarcerated and formerly individuals. There is a scarcity of research pertaining to the education experiences and attainment of these groups, particularly in the area of college-going; a conceptual framework used when discussing college readiness, preparation, access, and retention strategies that empower individuals to enroll and complete a college degree. The purpose of this paper is threefold: 1) to review the postsecondary correctional education literature; 2) to address gaps in higher education discourse and policy; and lastly 3) to discuss the conceptual framework.

- “Equity and Quality: A Historical Perspective and Contemporary Concern for Policy and Curriculum,” **Chancey Bosch**, Oral Roberts University, **Destinee Wannemacher**, Oral Roberts University, and **Brad Davis**, Oral Roberts University

  This paper examines both the policy of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965), No Child Left Behind Act (2001), and the re-authorization of the Every Student Succeeds Act (2015)
and the change in curriculum. A historical examination of equity and quality in education may begin with "A Nation at Risk" (National Commission on Education Excellence, 1983) by connecting educational reform in education with curricular outcomes. Although commissioned reports, legislation, and policy addressed quality and equity for all, 52 years later, the fundamental struggle for equity and quality persists. The opportunity gap in the P-20 landscape needs educational policy affecting curricular change in relation to educational policy. The purpose of this paper is to contribute to the professional conversation of how state and federal policy influence curriculum design. Findings will support the need of all learners by promoting efforts for an equitable and quality education.

• “The Role of Interstate Compacts in Online Education: Analyzing the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement Adopters,” Melvin Tanner, Doctoral Student, University of Florida, and Valerie Crespin-Trujillo, Doctoral Student, University of Wisconsin – ELPA

Higher education is increasingly influenced by distance education. Federal data between 2014-2016 demonstrates growth in the number of college students enrolled in online courses. As more institutions offer online courses and programs to an expanding number of students, the leadership role that states are playing is also evolving. To better understand the state function within the distance education landscape, this study analyzes the early adopters of the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA), a collaboration between the four higher education interstate compacts designed to reduce the bureaucratic hurdles for colleges and universities to offer their online degree programs in other states.

Concurrent Session D: Public Policy and Finance in the Era of the States

• “529 College Saving Plans: The Equity Question,” Christine Nelson, Assistant Professor, Higher Education, Morgridge College of Education, University of Denver, Sarah Jordan, Ph.D. Student, Higher Education, University of Denver, and Ranjana Damie, Research Assistant Professor, University of New Mexico

529 college savings plans are managed by states or educational institutions in 49 states and the District of Columbia. They involve tax-advantaged, asset-building investment accounts that are managed by financial institutions. A wide variety of these plans is available to families to save for their children’s post-secondary education. In this paper, we intend to critically assess whether or not current research has adequately assessed who is best being served by 529 state policies and practices and whether equity concerns are being considered in the future of 529s.
• “Institutional Policy and the Struggle to Maintain Tuition Transparency in an Increasingly Complex Environment,” Glen Nelson, Professor of Practice and Special Advisor to the Executive Vice President, Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer, Arizona State University, Gregory Wolniak, Associate Clinical Professor and Director, Center for Research on Higher Education Outcomes, New York University, Casey George, Assistant Professor of Higher Education, University of Louisville, and Laura Davis, Assistant Director, Center for Research on Higher Education Outcomes, New York University

The presentation highlights the findings from a set of research projects aimed to improve the accuracy and accessibility of information pertaining to college tuition. This research, designated as the “Affordability and Transparency Initiative,” responds to the fact that tuition policies adopted at U.S. colleges and universities have become increasingly complex, which may disproportionately affect underrepresented students and fuel stratification. The Initiative focuses on the responsibility of institutions to provide accurate and accessible information to the public, resulting in evidence-based recommendations for institutions to clearly and accurately portray cost information to prospective students, and the implications of not doing so.


As free college programs have spread throughout the nation, experts and advocates have rightfully warned that many recently enacted programs will provide few benefits for low-income students and students of color. This paper provides a detailed evaluation of 32 enacted and proposed free college and college promise programs using 8 equity-centric criteria related to what expenses programs cover, who they benefit, and whether they penalize students for losing eligibility or moving out of state. Where available, data on participation by race are also presented to identify programs that fail to serve underrepresented students.

11:15-11:30 am Break
11:30 am – 12:45 pm  **Lunch and Student IGNITE! Policy Competition**
Opening remarks: **Lorelle Espinosa**, Ph.D., Associate Vice President, Policy Research & Strategy, Center for Policy Research and Strategy, American Council on Education

**Student Finalists:**
- “State Fiscal Support, Need-Based Aid, and Student Loan Debt: A Panel Data Regression Analysis,” **Matthew Cuozzo**, Master’s Student, Higher Education, University of Maryland
- “Dismantling the Settler Narrative: Educational Policy in K-12 and Higher Education with a focus on Indigenous Perspectives,” **Michelle Garcia-Olp & Ceema Samimi**, Students, University of Denver
- “From Seeds to Apples: How can Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) be Implemented at Colorado Residential Facilities for Forwarding the Education of Committed Youth?,” **Rachel Lovendahl**, Student, University of Denver

**IGNITE! Judges:** **Stella Flores**, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Higher Education; Director of Access and Equity, Steinhardt Institute for Higher Education Policy, New York University, **Lorelle Espinosa**, Ph.D., Associate Vice President, Policy Research & Strategy, Center for Policy Research and Strategy, American Council on Education

12:45 – 1:00 pm  **Break**

1:00 – 2:30 pm  **Closing Keynote Address**
- Speaker Introduction: **Lolita Tabron**, Assistant Professor, Education Leadership and Policy Studies, Morgridge College of Education, University of Denver
- Keynote Speaker: **Stella Flores**, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Higher Education; Director of Access and Equity, Steinhardt Institute for Higher Education Policy, New York University (confirmed)